CULTIVATING CHARACTER: A HOLISTIC FRAMEWORK FOR VALUE-BASED EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This article addresses the critical need to reinforce value-based education (VBE) within schools to counteract society's decline in moral values. It proposes a comprehensive, replicable, and actionable framework designed for implementation in Indian schools, yet adaptable to other contexts. The framework integrates six core components: spiritual, moral, social, cultural, legal compliance, and technology-based values, each with defined content and pedagogical approaches. It also emphasizes the importance of teacher training, community engagement, and continuous assessment to ensure effective implementation. The article reviews relevant theories, prior literature, and existing VBE practices, highlighting the benefits and limitations of this educational approach. This framework offers a structured pathway for fostering ethical character, responsible citizenship, and holistic student development by aligning with national educational aims and international aspirations such as the Sustainable Development Goals. It calls for further research to validate the framework's impact and sustainability in diverse settings.

Keywords: Value-Based Education, Holistic Framework, Character Development, Indian Education, Ethical Leadership

Introduction

Moral values have degenerated in society, and social ills and crime records show an increasing trend. This suggests a problem with our educational system, especially at the school level, where students first learn about values, ethics, and social responsibility. According to a few studies in cross-cultural contexts, there is a rise in the degradation of human values in schools, including crime, violence, and a lack of discipline. These issues threaten future development and call for the reinforcement of values-based teaching in schools (Al-Khalaf, 2024).

Instilling moral, social, and spiritual values is challenging for society because the current ailment is the lack of moral behaviour, fuelled by material civilisation and the desire for power and fortune. The development of virtues like truth, goodness, and beauty was highly valued in ancient Indian education, which had as its ultimate goal self-realisation or divine perfection (Amarnath, 2022). Amarnath (2022) further posits that the teacher in ancient India was a model of moral behaviour, and the teacher-student bond was spiritual and heavenly. The method included listening, meditation, and reflection.

Nowadays, with people valuing financial gains, education in schools and universities mainly focuses on producing bread and butter. To acquire knowledge, students are trained to collect, store, and retrieve vast amounts of information. Experts contend that rather than focusing on the amount of knowledge stored in the brain, education nowadays focuses on accessing and using that information throughout one's life (Singh, 2013). Furthermore, rather than emphasising value education, the current educational system places more of an emphasis on scientific and information-oriented education. Religious, social, moral, and spiritual aspects are all being overlooked. When too much focus is placed on materialistic fulfilment, value suffers (Bhat, 2018). Consequently, an education system lacking values is meaningless because learning new information and skills without cultivating moral principles and values makes education useless since it lacks the framework for applying that knowledge responsibly and constructively in real life. As a result, the educational system must be founded on values rather than just skill development.

Neil Hawkes established the concept of values-based education (VBE) in 1995. He describes VBE concepts in detail, including its history from its beginning, applications, and development. VBE is considered a revolutionary approach in education. It aims to give young people a thorough, moral education, which helps students stay well-rounded throughout their academic careers. VBE transforms education and society by allowing staff and students to examine their inner worlds and ethical vocabulary. VBE creates an environment conducive to learning so students can succeed more. With the help of VBE, students develop into more responsible individuals with healthy interpersonal relations. It equips students to face the world with moral principles and an optimistic outlook. According to Robb (1998), VBE is: "An activity during which children and students make clear or explicit those values underlying their attitudes and behaviour and assess the effectiveness of these values for the long-term wellbeing of self and others. They also reflect on other values and will acquire these values and associated behaviour if found to be more effective in realising the long-term wellbeing of everyone".

Teacher-centred teaching has long been a defining feature of Indian schooling, with rote learning and a focus on subject memorisation and exams (Sharma, 2020; Maiti et al., 2020). It also uses high academic pressure and overlooks individual talents by following a one-size-fits-all approach, in addition to teacher shortages and quality issues.

Furthermore, Mahatma Gandhi's Nai Talim, or Basic Education, is regarded as the cornerstone of the value-based paradigm due to its emphasis on a comprehensive development that combines manual, emotional, and intellectual training. Learning should occur through hands-on, craft-based activities rather than merely reading books. As per the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi (Kumar, 2015): "By education, I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man—body, mind and spirit."

Similarly, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a worldwide roadmap for peace, prosperity, and sustainability. In 2015, all United Nations member states accepted them as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In total, the SDGs include multiple goals that address everything from health and education to poverty and climate change (United Nations, 2015).

In keeping with both national education aims and international aspirations like the Sustainable Development aims, Indian education can develop into a more inclusive, compassionate, and future-ready system by incorporating values into curricula, activities, and school culture, and the VBE approach has the potential to revolutionise this conventional teaching. Therefore, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 promotes a paradigm change in education that is value-based, experiential, and student-centric. In keeping with the holistic development objectives stated in India's National Education Policy 2020, Joshi & Heena (2024) assert that education plays a transforming role in fostering academic knowledge and ethical, emotional, and spiritual growth.

The National Education Policy 2020 clarifies that "value education" is a crucial component of a student-centric curriculum. It includes stressing the growth of social and moral values, such as truth, peace, non-violence, love, and moral behaviour, in addition to cognitive abilities. NEP 2020 states "Value-based education will include the development of humanistic, ethical, Constitutional, and universal human values of truth (satya), righteous conduct (dharma), peace (shanti), love (prem), nonviolence (ahimsa), scientific temper, citizenship values, and also life-skills; lessons in seva/service and participation in community service programmes will be considered an integral part of a holistic education" (Government of India, 2020). These values should be incorporated into all subjects and levels of education. The ultimate aim is to prepare the students to meet the national and global challenges. Therefore, the demand for value-based education is widespread.

This article's objectives are to outline the theories and other approaches to VBE, the importance placed on core values, the anticipated advantages, the methods of assessment, the empirical evidence, and the role of educators. Additionally, the article suggests a holistic framework for VBE and techniques for implementing it in the Indian schooling context, duly supported by prior literature.

Theories of Value-Based Education

Theories of value-based education incorporate moral principles into instruction to produce morally upright decision-makers. Moral development theory, values clarification, character education, and action learning are important strategies. These techniques help students develop a comprehensive character by encouraging virtues like honesty, compassion, decency, and accountability. A person's character and personality formation depend on their core moral principles. They demonstrate self-control and offer an accurate assessment of a society's or country's progress, revealing the degree of independence and affection it possesses.

Kohlberg promotes a widely accepted theory known as the Moral Development Theory. According to this view, people move through stages of moral reasoning, making moral decisions based on universal principles, societal expectations, and personal needs.
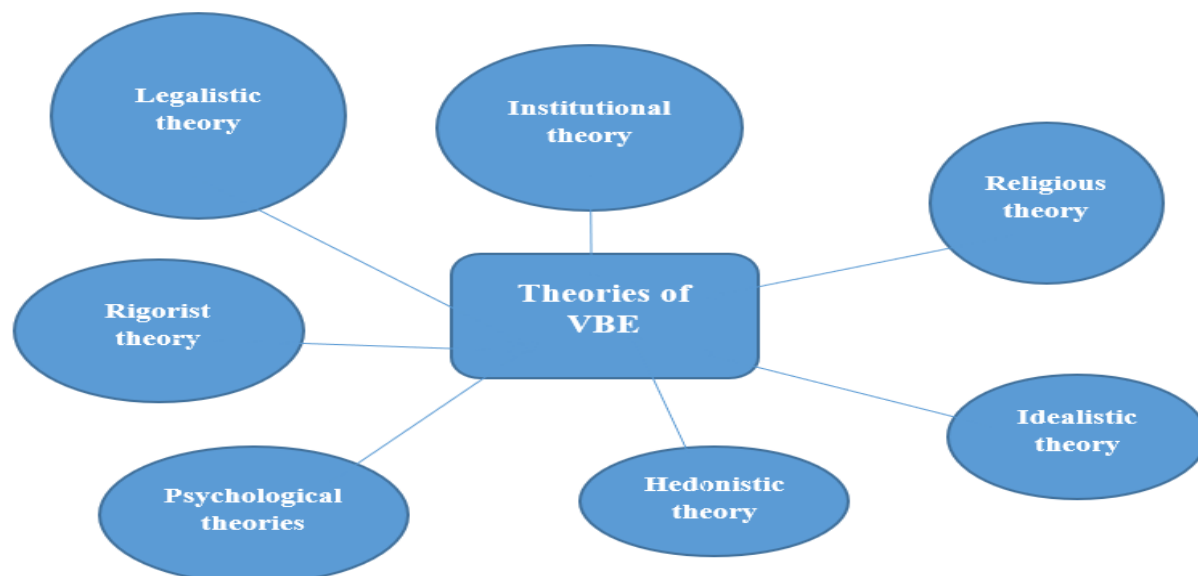
Figure 1 Theories of VBE

Figure 1 depicts various theories of VBE. Perfection is the sole criterion in idealistic theory. Any personality or concept is considered good if it is flawless. The perfection can be rated using a variety of metrics. According to religious theory, religion is the norm that unites a community, group, etc. Religion may be natural or revealed. Pleasure is the foundation of hedonistic theory. On this basis, human statements and needs are classified as either good or negative. In the intuitional theory, intuition is regarded as the norm rather than as a source of enjoyment. Man's actions are evaluated solely based on intuition. Rigorist theory, on the other hand, stresses duty as the only criterion rather than pleasure or intuition. Emotion has no place in objectivity and logic, where duty comes first. According to legalistic thought, the supreme authority is the law of the land. The only way to be moral is to live your life in accordance with the law (Margaret, 2024).

Understanding how people form and internalise values through cognitive processes, social interactions, and personal experiences is the main goal of psychological theories of value-based education. These theories frequently draw on theories such as Kohlberg's phases of moral development.

Economic values, health (physical and recreational), social values, moral values, aesthetic values, intellectual values, and religious/spiritual values are the eight categories of values listed by Broudy & Palmer (1965). Furthermore, they have assigned varying degrees of importance to both good and negative qualities. Additionally, the updated curriculum suggested by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (2022) emphasises the development of the following values: hard work, discipline, cooperation, communication skills, cleanliness, compassion, truthfulness, integrity, responsibility, justice, respect for law and order, courage, and democratic values. With a strong emphasis on incorporating these values into the learning process across all subjects, these values are highlighted.

Broadly, there are three approaches to teaching and learning value-based education. These are shown in the following Figure 2.
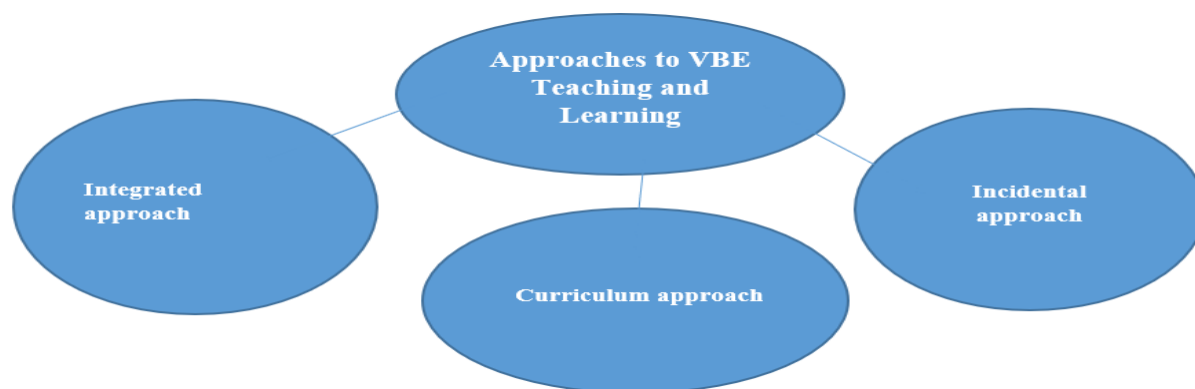
Figure 2 Approaches to VBE

1) The indirect method is another name for the integrated approach. The majority of public schools have adopted this. Values are taught and incorporated into various disciplines and activities in this method. For instance, while sports teach courage, initiative, and leadership, physical education promotes qualities like grace, strength, agility, and health (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2025). Work experience fosters the appreciation of music and art, environmental balance, and physical skills. Social studies teach rigorous effort and civic qualities. During free time, people read books, engage in assemblies and events, and talk with academics about values.

This method exposes students to situations that promote the growth of desired or intended values. Even when their teachers are not teaching them directly, students can better comprehend life's values when exposed to richly moral literature, films, or videos.

2) It is sometimes referred to as the formal or direct technique. It is based on methodical instruction during designated school time slots. It is a structured method for preparing a curriculum. This approach finds texts to teach values at various levels. Teachers follow a predetermined timetable and number of periods when doing it.

This approach might be comparable to indoctrination, in which students are supposed to absorb knowledge without inquiry or thought. However, students may not receive it well, so it may face resistance from both students and teachers, which would have little impact on the learners.

3) The incidental approach allows learners to learn important values through their daily life experiences, which can occur at any time, without needing a specific curriculum, allowing learners to acquire values as they arise. For instance, on numerous occasions, such as at the school morning assembly, NCC, or sports day, can be used to highlight the deeds of bravery, discipline, courage, etc., of the students. Students internalize their values due to the cumulative effect of these encounters (Saravanan, 2019).

Thus, the basic principle of value-based education approaches is that moral values should actively contribute to students through education by promoting moral characteristics and responsible citizenship beyond academic knowledge. These values, which usually include respect, honesty, empathy, justice, and social responsibility, are often integrated into the curriculum and other educational settings and activities through various pedagogical approaches.

Prior Literature and Methodology
Prior Literature
A few studies (Cieciuch & Schwartz, 2012; Hofstede, 1980) have recognised that different nations have different value orientations. For example, Finland, Bhutan, and Japan are regarded as countries that highly emphasize value education. However, they have somewhat different value-based education practices, methodologies, and priorities. On the other hand, Bhutan

incorporates happiness ideals into education, strongly focuses on values and culture, and encourages youngsters to be fully involved in developing their communities (Sherab et al., 2014).

On the other hand, Finland strongly emphasizes play-based learning, minimal homework, and student well-being. Japan strongly emphasizes societal peace, lifelong learning with high academic standards, and the formation of moral character (Karvonen et al., 2018; Sakamoto, 2008).

However, according to Lovat et al. (2010), values education is now at the forefront of current research insights into effective pedagogy rather than being primarily linked to the religious goal of faith schools. Scholars (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2022) show that values influence people's attitudes, behaviours, and perceptions. Even individual and teacher opinions of value kinds and priorities differ significantly from those of the two European nations of Switzerland and the United Kingdom (Oeschger et al., 2024).

The refined framework in this paper shows a comprehensive, replicable, and actionable pedagogical framework that explicitly and holistically fosters value-based education, but some components may be missing in prior studies (Huang et al., 2024; Pandey, 2024). Several studies, for example, Pérez-Fuentes et al. (2019), Rudnev & Vauclair (2018), Ikhwan et al. (2019), and Elsayed (2024), suggest the crucial role of social, moral, and cultural values in shaping children's personalities and fostering positive human traits for effective, productive, and committed individuals in value-based education. Elsayed's (2024) study emphasises the importance of family values in instilling positive social values in children, fostering a compassionate and committed future generation capable of contributing to society.

As a component of VBE, "Dharma" is analysed by Isser et al. (2024) as a religious value. By analysing its contemporary position in the Indian knowledge system, they analyse how current "Dharma" teachings are incorporated into the curriculum. Religious and ethical principles may be considered vital elements of the VBE framework. Religious and ethical principles can be an important component of a value that supports cultural heritage, national unity, and human growth, according to Sargent (1944).

Furthermore, the University Education Commission (Government of India, 1962) suggested that the primary factor influencing the spread of Indian historical growth has been students' spiritual teaching. Researchers such as Lickona (1996), Berkowitz & Bier (2004), Sindhwani & Kumar (2013), and Khare & Rao (2023) suggested the inclusion of spiritual values in the VBE framework. These studies provide empirical and theoretical support for integrating spiritual values into value-based education.

Superka et al. (1976) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (1996) emphasised respect for individuals and adherence to social norms. Indirectly, a good sense of responsibility and respect for rules and laws is a crucial element of value education. 'Law compliance' is a direct value in value education because it fosters a sense of responsibility, respect for rules, and ethical behaviour. Prior studies seem to have hardly included 'law compliance' as a separate component value in their frameworks. Ramirez & Palos-Sanchez's (2018) study found that ethical education positively influences university students' willingness to comply with corporate law, enhancing their legal compliance intentions.

Youth participation in learning can be increased by using technology in VBE (Hardiyanti et al., 2023). In addition to teaching critical thinking and technology ethical quandaries, technologies can help students understand values. Their findings support the idea that technology can improve student engagement and learning, but they also point out the possibility of digital literacy gaps. Ushakova et al.'s (2021) study findings report that using digital technologies influences the formation of spiritual and moral values. Fadillah et al. (2024) report that adaptive learning is among the most important developments brought about

by technology breakthroughs in education. Gocen & Aydemir's (2020) research findings show that using Artificial Intelligence (AI) will benefit teachers and schools and have implications for imparting education. Similarly, ICT use in value-based education encourages and supports the development of critical and scientific thinking, and digital tools improve moral and ethical learning in educational contexts, according to Sharma (2021) and Goral (2017).

Methodology

The concepts, components, necessity, methods of delivery, assessment of impact, challenges, benefits, role of educators, some practices, and limitations of VBE are some of the research questions discussed in this study. The study is not grounded in actual data or experiments. Instead, it delves into a notion or concept that is not directly observable or verifiable. Academic literature reports, articles from business and professional journals, and resources from portals and websites all served as the foundation for the methods employed in this work, and the refined framework was developed.

Refined Framework for Value-Based Education: A Holistic Approach

Components and Contents of VBE

Moral: Moral principles guide actions, distinguish right from wrong, and form moral character. They are influenced by philosophy, religion, and lifestyle, and are a complex process in decision-making.

Topics like respect, empathy, responsibility for learning, honesty, caring for the environment, cleanliness, critical thinking, drug abuse, health risks of alcohol, health management, etc., may be included.

Social: Social values are shared beliefs and principles within a society that guide individual behaviour, promote cooperation, maintain social order, and foster personal growth. These are oriented and concerning to society (Amarnath, 2022). They are ideal criteria the majority shares, leading to a better society and regulating daily life (Türkkahraman, 2014).

Topics like building teamwork, communication, cooperation, negotiation, confidence, etc., may be included.

Cultural: Cultural values are essential in forming individual and collective identities, assisting people in defining who they are and where they fit into a larger social framework. They provide social cohesion, set norms, direct decision-making, and regulate how people behave within society. According to Trang (2024), culture acts as a bridge that promotes mutual respect and understanding between countries and civilisations.

Topics such as showing love and pride towards society and country, respect for customs, respect for religion, understanding history, expressing diversity, unity, and open-mindedness may be included.

Spiritual: These are the integrative values based on the individual's faith (Baidya & Baidya, 2023). Spiritual values include compassion, kindness, honesty, integrity, forgiveness, and respect, centred on a more profound sense of meaning and purpose than merely achieving monetary success. Spiritual value, which is concerned with self-awareness, is the highest ethical value. Such values can be used to integrate spiritual well-being into the classroom. Even spirituality-based curricula that teach students about various spiritual traditions and activities have been produced by some institutions (Gurukul, 2017).

Topics such as self-awareness, caring for others, personal values, mindfulness practice, visiting temples or pilgrimage places, practicing yoga, meditation, etc., may be included.

Law Compliance: Value education teaches students about law compliance, civic duty, legal literacy, and social justice, fostering a strong ethical foundation. It teaches accountability, justice, responsibility, respect for the law, and ethical behaviour, creating a positive learning environment and being good citizens. Encouraging the rule of law via education also aids students in gaining the values, attitudes, abilities, and information necessary to make positive

contributions to society (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2019).

Topics like legal awareness, the purpose of obeying the laws, traffic rules, social norms, protesting the right way, non-violence, how to interact with authorities, legal literacy, social justice, ensuring discipline at home, etc., may be included.

Technology: Integrating education and values is more important than ever in the age of digitally driven pedagogy (Mitra, 2023). The benefits and effects that technology can have on students' learning in a classroom setting are fostered by technological values in education. It improved critical thinking abilities, creativity, individualised learning experiences, and information access.

Topics such as awareness about the uses and misuses of technology, research, communication, creativity, educational tools, digital literacy, cyber-bullying, privacy, online behaviour, etc., may be included.
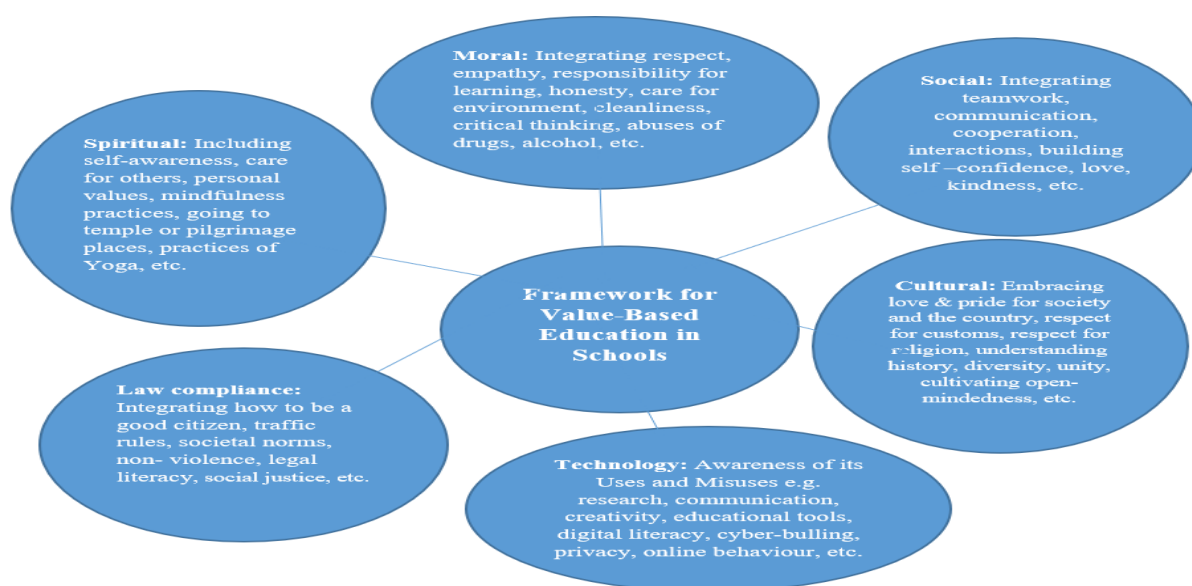
Figure 3 Refined VBE holistic approach

Remember

Moral values foster strong character, ethical decision-making, and social responsibility in students by instilling honesty, respect, empathy, and fairness, enabling them to distinguish right from wrong.

Social values foster responsible, empathetic, kind, and ethical citizens who respect others, promote justice, contribute positively to their communities, and make decisions based on moral principles, promoting a harmonious society.

Spiritual values foster students' purpose, empathy, compassion, mental well-being, responsibility, positive outlook, and character development, promoting better mental well-being, responsibility, and a positive outlook on life.

Cultural values foster a positive school environment, promoting respect, responsibility, integrity, and student cooperation. This leads to improved well-being, academic performance, and character development.

Integrating technological values into the classroom fosters responsible technology use and consideration of social effects while also improving student engagement, critical thinking, global awareness, ethical decision-making, and digital literacy.

Law compliance values ensure a safe, equitable, and well-managed learning environment, protecting students, fostering trust, minimizing risks, and upholding ethical conduct within the school community.

The elements of the VBE framework proposed in this research align with the goals of Mahatma Gandhi's Nai Talim and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4). The proposed framework incorporates technology integration, legal compliance, and social, moral, cultural, and spiritual values. VBE encourages all-encompassing education by fusing community service, moral foundation, manual labour, and intellectual growth. By encouraging moral consciousness, empathy, cultural sensitivity, spiritual introspection, lifelong learning, and global citizenship, it seeks to develop the children. Gandhi's view of education as a tool for fostering moral character and producing responsible citizens is thus reflected in the proposed framework. Sharma (2022), in his research, also attempts to align Mahatma Gandhi's Nai Talim with Sustainable Development Goal 4, promoting holistic education, moral consciousness, empathy, cultural sensitivity, and lifelong learning through global citizenship education.

Implementation Strategy

While discussing VBE is relatively simple, putting it into practice is a complex undertaking that requires the utmost resolve. Since value education fosters social cohesion and unity, it necessitates the cooperation of parents, teachers, curriculum planners, administrators, and others. Value education includes teachers' methods, students' learning styles, and the text (Bhat, 2018). The following steps are suggested:

1) Before adopting the Refined VBE model, school administrators and teachers should assess how it would help their students develop their personalities, acquire new knowledge, and behave ethically.

2) A Value-Based Education Committee (VBEC) of a few senior students, school teachers, and other stakeholders should exist.

3) To encourage students to learn VBE, the school should have a monthly General Assembly. Students become familiar with the language and ideas.

4) On the assembly day, teachers or outside speakers should be asked to give a 15-30 minute speech/presentation on the topics suggested in the model.

5) Students may be asked to prepare and deliver on the subjects in groups/projects to foster a sense of competition. As a result, they will become more self-assured and have better communication skills.

6) The VBE Committee may provide input every three months on whether the school children are gaining anything from the VBE discussions.

7) The principal, teachers, and other school administrators can discuss the implementation of VBE in addition to the curriculum while creating the school's annual progress and accomplishments report. The message might spread, and other local schools might decide to adopt and use VBE. The school's reputation will improve as a result

It is important to remember that various environmental elements, including the home, school, neighbourhood, peer group, and media, all impact how values are implanted when VBE is implemented. Home and school are at the top of the hierarchy. Figure 4 depicts the implementation steps for VBE.
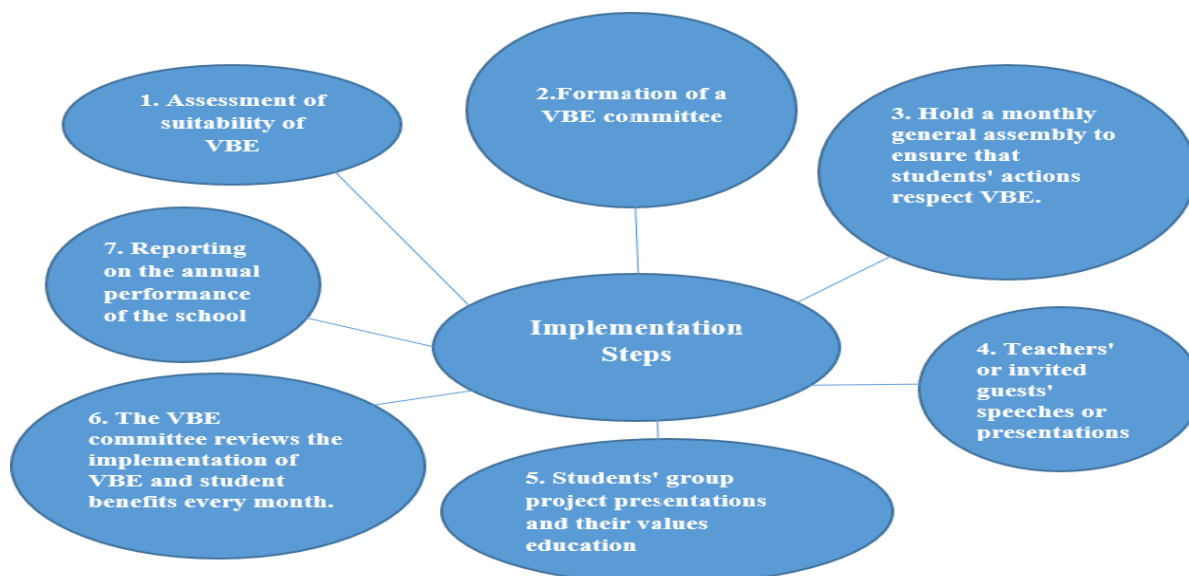
Figure 4 Implementation steps for VBE

Core Values in VBE
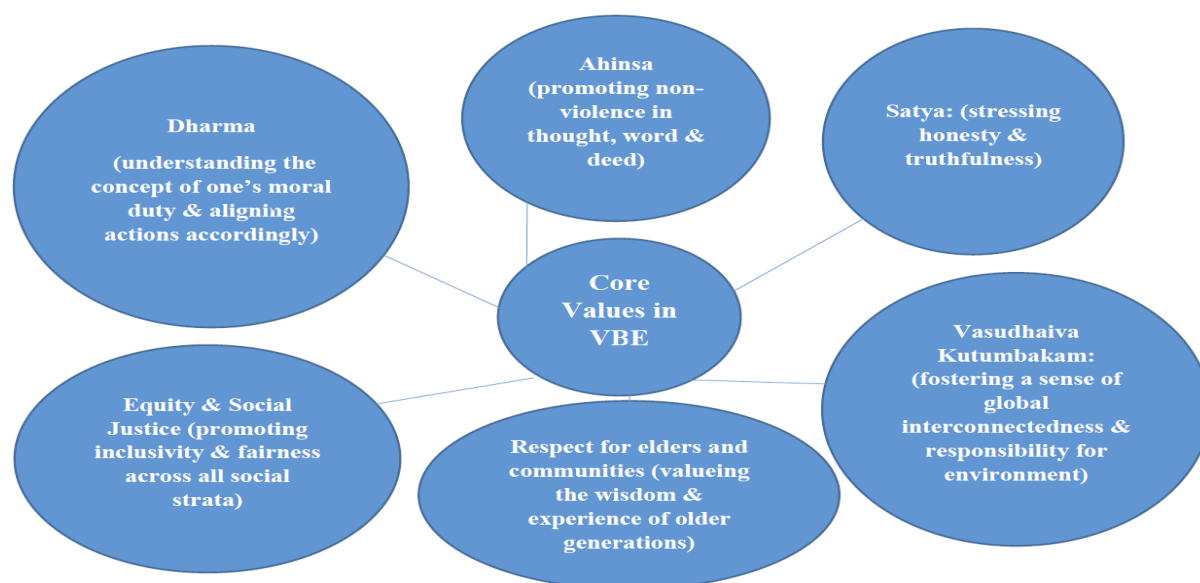
Figure 5 Core values in VBE

Core Values Emphasised

A value-based education framework for Indian environments should emphasize cultural values like "Dharma", "Ahinsa", "Satya", and "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", incorporating environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and diversity, with real-world application through community engagement and experiential learning.

According to some research (e.g., Mlinar, 2023; Nermin, 2021; Elamadurthi, 2012), universal values are based on the idea that humanity is valuable, which is a value shared by all religions and needs to be taught to students. The core or primary values that should be instilled in the students include respect for human rights, equity, freedom, peace, justice, democracy, preserving the environment, tolerance, honesty, empathy, responsibility, and truth.

Teaching and Learning Methods for VBE

Figure 6 Teaching and learning methods for VBE

Four potential teaching and learning strategies for VBE are shown in Figure 6, while teachers and school administrators may choose to use a combination of these strategies or adapt alternative approaches. The dedication, resources, location, and other factors will vary from school to school. Symbols, graphs, posters, cartoons, charts, and photographs are examples of visual experiences that, along with aural experiences, give students a significant platform for self-expression and creative expression, according to Abrol (2025). These experiences are more effective in fostering communication with instructors at the elementary school level (Abrol, 2025).

**Improvement of the School Environment**
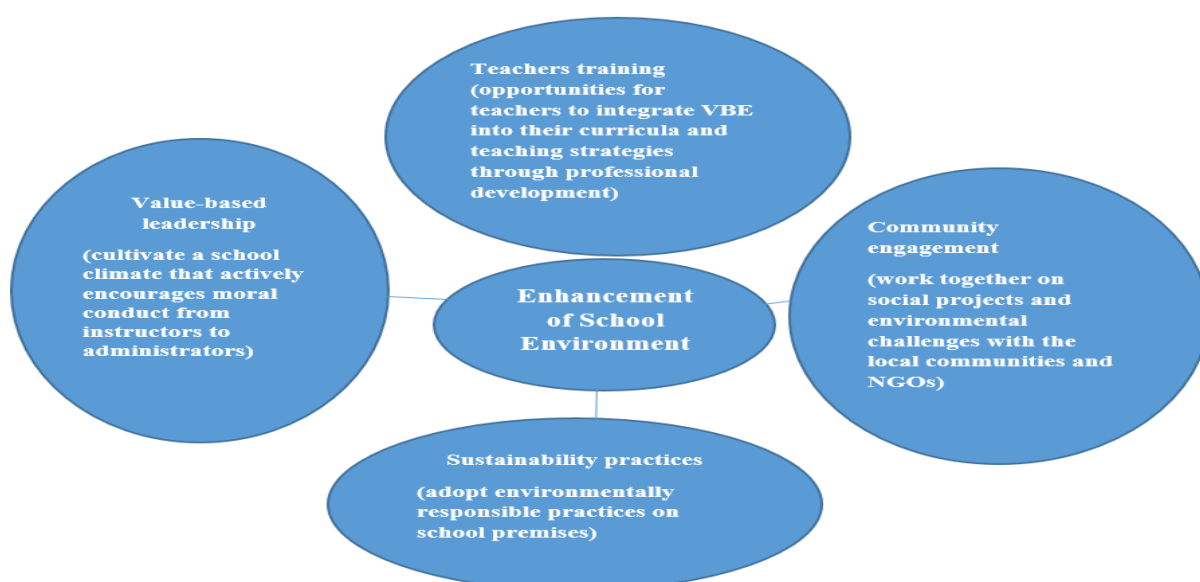
Figure 7 Enhancement of the school environment

A school's environment can be improved by implementing a VBE regarding value-based leadership, teacher professional development through seminars and trainings, community involvement, and school sustainability practices (figure 7). Strong moral values

and character are developed by students in such an atmosphere, which also creates a more upbeat and encouraging learning atmosphere

Assessment Methods for VBE
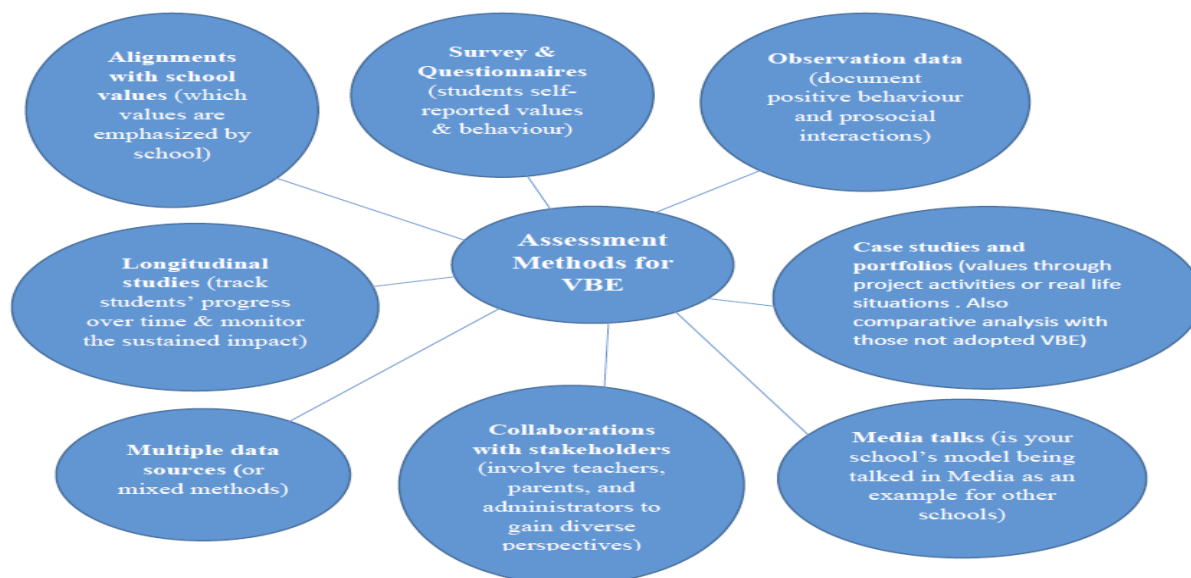
Figure 8 Assessment methods for VBE

Description of Assessment Methods
1) Surveys and Questionnaires: Self-reported principles and conduct by students, perceptions of student behaviour by peers and teachers. Surveys to evaluate student well-being and the school climate.
2) Observational Data: Observations in the classroom to record prosocial behaviour and constructive relationships, such as how students react to moral conundrums when participating in role-playing exercises.
3) Case Studies and Portfolios: Recording instances of students exhibiting values in projects, exercises, or actual circumstances.
4) Comparative Analysis: Comparing students' academic performance and social conduct in schools with and without a strong value-based education.
5) Alignment with School Values: Ensure that the evaluation techniques appropriately represent the particular values the school emphasizes.
6) Multiple Data Sources: Use various assessment techniques to get a complete picture of students' development.
7) Longitudinal Studies: Track student progress over time to monitor the sustained impact of value-based education.
8) Collaboration with Stakeholders: Engage administrators, parents, and teachers in the evaluation process to obtain a variety of viewpoints.
9) Public Feedback and Reactions: Specific examples of the applications of VBE and its effects on their children in terms of behavioural and attitudinal changes can be used to collect the opinions and responses of the general public and social leaders. There should be words of support and gratitude for the schools if there is to be any real impact.
10) Media Talks: Is your school's model being discussed as an example for other schools?
In summary, observational surveys, student self-reports, peer evaluations, analysis of school climate data, tracking prosocial behaviours, and comparing student outcomes with a control group are some methods that can measure the impact of value-based education in schools.

These methods consider the school's overall culture and the integration of values into the curriculum and daily practices. In this regard, the counsel and recommendation of Sai (2023) are of great value when he states, "The larger portion of efforts must be to make it practical, activity-based learning. This would include the child's thought process through discussion, case studies to prepare them for practical situations, and then encouraging them to practise it in a controlled, life-like environment, and eventually in real-life situations. This approach would naturally need the participation of all three stakeholders—teachers, parents, and the child. Community and social service activities can help not just to train children but also to test them on high moral grounds".

Key Areas to Focus on for Assessment

1) Positive Social Behaviours: Students' collaboration and cooperation have increased. They show respect and sensitivity for teachers and peers. They are active in programmes, including community services, and they have diminished ability to resolve conflicts and engage in bullying.

2) Ethical Decision-making: The capacity to recognize moral conundrums and make responsible decisions (an ethical dilemma is a kind of ethical problem that occurs when the obligations and options available in a particular circumstance do not permit an ethical solution). Integrity and honesty in daily relationships and academic work. Applying critical thinking techniques to the analysis of moral dilemmas.

3) Personal Development Growth: Enhanced confidence and self-esteem (the total sense of self-worth and how one feels about oneself). Positive outlook on education and self-improvement. Resilience in the face of difficulties and failures (resilience is the capacity to recover from difficult circumstances. For example, stress management is the ability to handle stress and get back on track).

Benefits Claimed from VBE
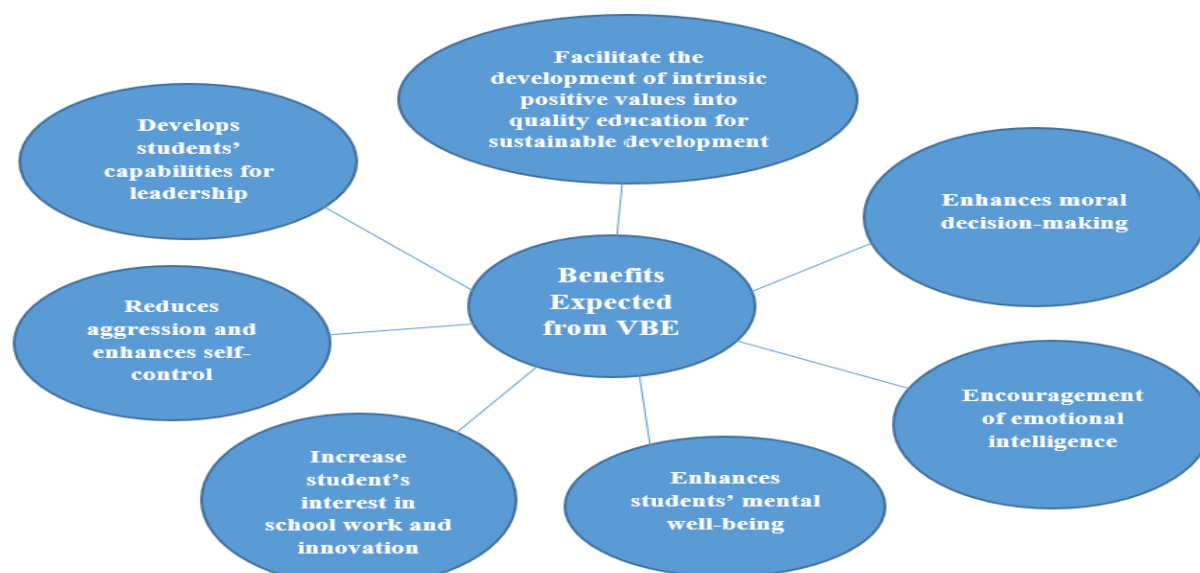
Figure 9 Expected benefits from VBE

According to academic research, using VBE can foster a number of advantages (see figure 9). For instance, VBE holistically supports the development of inherent positive values into high-quality education for sustainable growth, according to Huang et al. (2024) Value education equips students for leadership roles by integrating ethical concepts into the curriculum and highlighting the significance of justice, fairness, and honesty. Similarly, values education significantly influenced students' attitudes towards sustainable development, leadership

conduct, and behaviour, according to Unachukwu & Amaonye's (2021) study, which employed a sizable random sample of Nigerian. Furthermore, it helps improve parents' engagement in their children's values learning (Goodall, 2013).

Similarly, value-based education can significantly help reduce aggressiveness and enhance self-control in children by fostering empathy, respect for others, and a strong moral compass. This will enable students to make moral decisions and effectively manage their emotions (SSRVM Trust, 2024). According to Hawkes (2009), VBE can improve self-control by proactively incorporating moral principles into education, enabling people to base their judgements on a more profound comprehension of right and wrong. Furthermore, VBE promotes self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management—the fundamental elements of emotional intelligence. Additionally, studies regularly show that VBE greatly promotes students' well-being, capacity for moral decision-making, inclusive attitude, and skills (Adiba et al., 2023). Besides, students' interest in school work and innovation increases (Al-Khalaf, 2024).

Impact of VBE (Empirical Evidence)
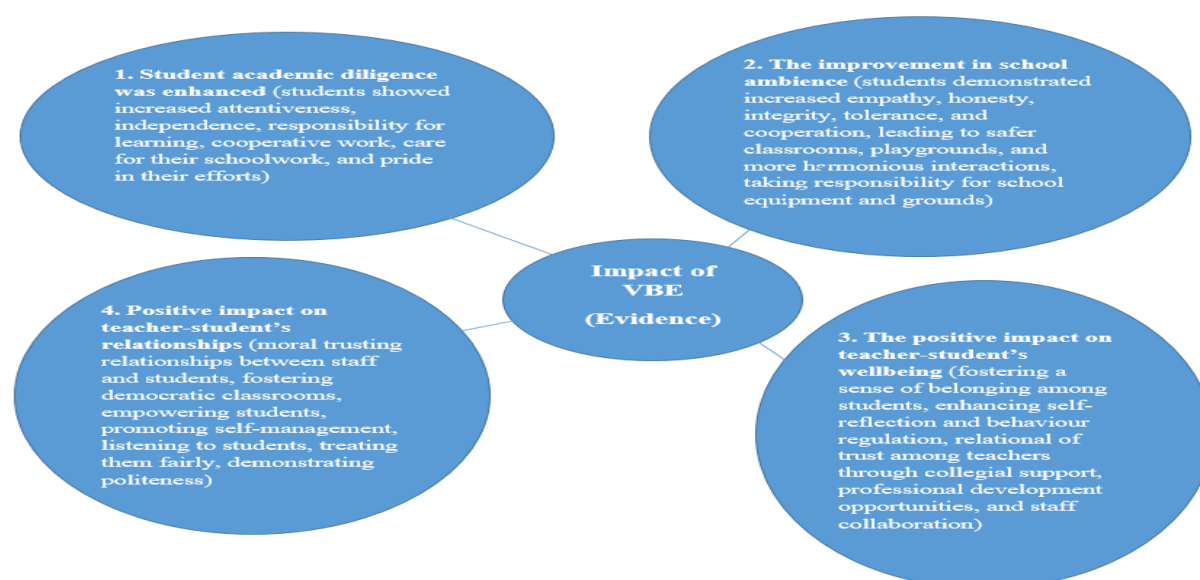
**Figure 10** Impact of VBE (evidence)
Source: Hawkes (2009)

Additional research findings showed that families, teachers, and students developed a shared lexicon once VBE became apparent. Teachers believed that improved academic and social outcomes for kids and more focused, responsible, and cooperative classrooms resulted from fostering empathy in pupils and clarifying values. According to a study by Shrestha & Gupta (2019), VBE has improved students' behaviour. While Joshi & Hemalatha (2007) showed that students' respect for elders while interacting, follow dress culture, and have awareness and respect for traditional dance and music. In this regard, Lover's (2017) study showed that value-based education, when appropriately applied, can positively impact various educational objectives, including intellectual, social, moral, and emotional.VBE enhances students' moral development and social skills (Thebar & Upadhyay, 2024). VBE enhances academic learning, social skills, and relationship development, promoting self-assurance, capability, and brightness in students who embrace positive ideals early in life.

Similarly, Shrestha & Gupta's (2019) study in the Nepalese context found that value education taught fundamental life values like honesty, hard work, respect, cooperation, compassion, and forgiveness, leading to positive changes in students' behaviour.

Challenges of VBE for Schools
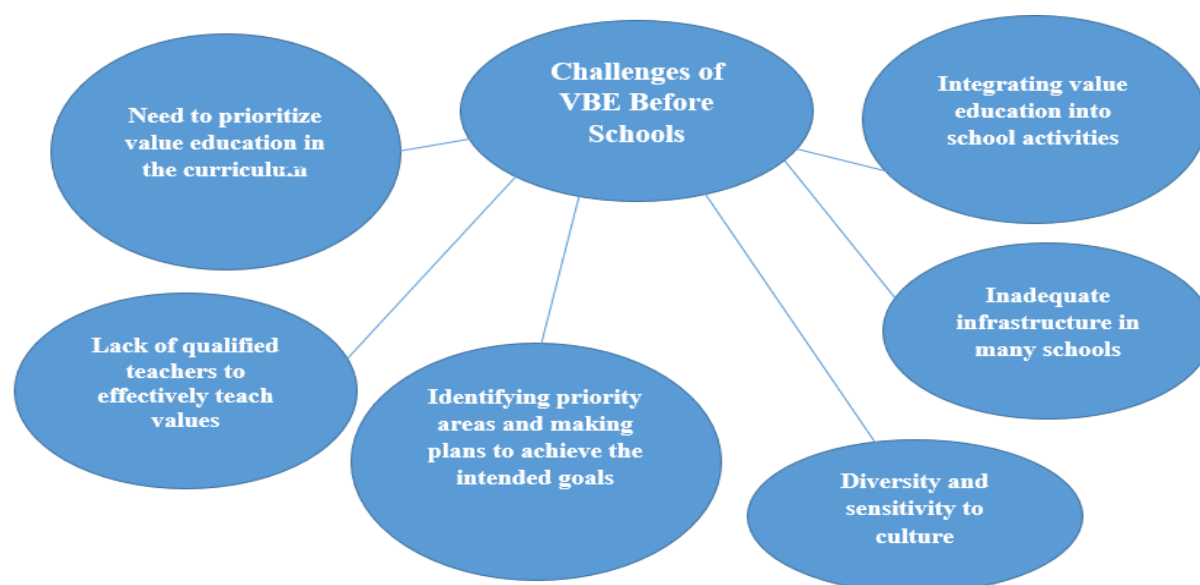
Figure 11 Challenges in VBE

Although there may be several challenges to schools in implementing VBE in India, figure 11 highlights main ones: a shortage of qualified teachers, inadequate infrastructure, a failure to identify priority areas where VBE is urgently needed to achieve the desired goals, curriculum prioritisation, and how to incorporate value education into school activities, among other issues (Central Board of Secondary Education, 2012). Additionally, India's diverse cultural landscape necessitates a curriculum that acknowledges and promotes universal values, despite the varying interpretations across regions and communities (Lalita, 2024).

In a qualitative study, Carbonilla et al. (2024) reported several challenges in implementing VBE in schools in the Philippines. These include socio-economic pressures, peer influence, personal biases, internal conflicts, societal norms, and practical constraints that hinder the consistent application of values. One of the respondents stated that common challenges include "maintaining consistency in behaviour, facing ethical dilemmas, and striking a balance between ideals and realities.". Similarly, in the Ethiopian context, Tadege et al.'s (2022) study findings showed that teachers have negative attitudes because of a set of factors. They further state, "The worsening of students' behaviour in particular and the deterioration of the moral value system in general made teachers mistrust the subject".

Role of Educators

Teachers play a crucial role in helping children develop their morals and character. They demonstrate the qualities they seek to inculcate by acting as mentors and role models (e.g., Ferreira & Schulze, 2014). However, in terms of instilling values in the students, the responsibility of educators becomes both more satisfying and more difficult. Through their constructive role and proposed methods, teachers as educators can properly assimilate various core values (Mandal, 2021). Teachers should provide an example, live up to the values they teach, and integrate them into lesson plans and activities to instill values in the classroom. For students, the teacher serves as a source of knowledge, a mentor, a guide, a surrogate parent, and a motivator (Kalitha, 2015).

Like road signs, learned teachers indicate the direction of the path (Radha, 2016). Teachers must have a healthy attitude and should possess rich values. Similarly, Behera (2020) posits

that teachers play a crucial role in instilling values in young learners, serving as models of character and behaviour and embodying societal expectations.

The teacher's role in cultivating fundamental human values in the students is indispensable. He should be able to develop concern for nationalism, environment, and integration in the students and foster fundamental values of democracy, rule of law, social justice, and humanity enshrined in the Constitution of India (Radha, 2016).

Therefore, educators are essential in creating a value-based learning environment that fosters children's formation of positive relationships and produces responsible and productive citizens (Amollo & Lilian, 2017). However, educators must undergo continual training in implementing values-based education to promote social cohesion, inclusivity, and multicultural understanding (Al-Khalaf, 2024).

In addition to educators, parents and society also play roles in developing students' character and moral compass. While educators actively teach and model values in the classroom and schools, parents are the primary influence by modelling values at home, and society offers a larger framework for promoting moral behaviour and positive behaviour (e.g., Chandra & Azimuddin, 2013; Das Gupta & Biswas, 2018).

Figure 12 below depicts the role of educators in VBE.
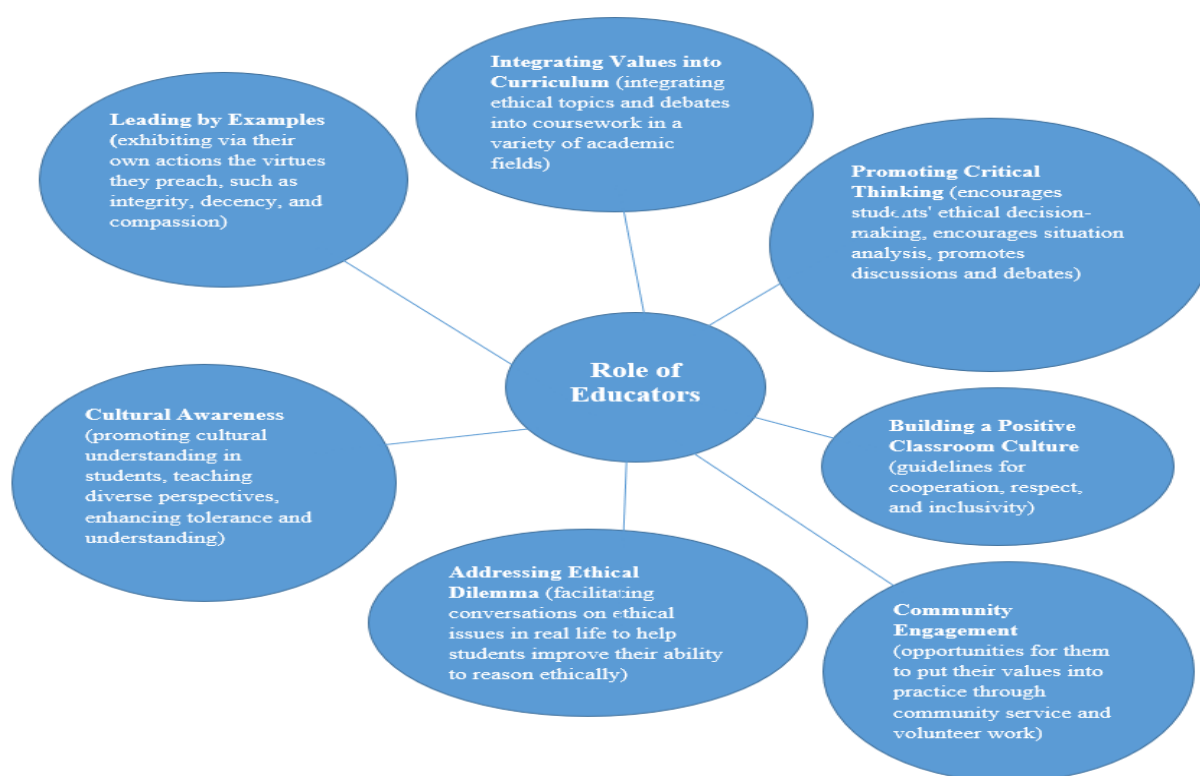
Figure 12 Role of educators

Teachers' Training

One of the important elements in the effective implementation of VBE in schools is the requirement of trained teachers, as it helps educators instill core human values in the teaching pedagogy. This enables teachers to have pedagogical strategies that integrate ethical principles like respect, empathy, and responsibility into daily lessons, leading to cognitive and moral development in students (Lovat et al., 2009). Professional development activities are implemented to support teachers in effectively providing value education, focusing on classroom management strategies, ethical dilemmas, and pedagogical methodologies (Pandey, 2024).

Teachers must be ethically aware to guide students in navigating moral complexities in a rapidly changing world. Teacher training promotes personal reflection and ethical leadership, enabling educators to be role models for their students. Institutions investing in teacher training are not merely leading to professional development but also a foundational step towards creating compassionate, respectful, and socially responsible future generations (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015).

Teachers' practical training fosters teacher-student relationships, boosting the learning environment in schools and strengthening teacher and student resilience, leading to improved student academic thoroughness (Lovat et al., 2009). According to NEP 2020, successful vocational education delivery greatly depends on having teachers with intense training. By imparting teachers' practical skills and pedagogical resources, it hopes to create a capable and independent workforce.

Practices

Certain schools in India claim that they have implemented VBE. A few of them include the following:

1) Jasudben ML School, Khar, Mumbai, has partnered with Amar Chitra Katha to conduct online sessions for "values education" for children. "Children are engaged in activities such as identifying characters from stories and analysing their behaviour and subsequent outcomes."

These sessions move beyond storytelling. Children are engaged in activities such as identifying different characters from stories, analysing their behaviour, and the subsequent outcomes of their actions and reactions.

The significance of VBE is also extensively indicated on the Shri Harshad C. Valia International School website in Andheri, Mumbai. It states, "We believe in not only churning out intelligent but also value-driven students, making them ready for life's challenges. We do not sideline the importance of co-curricular activities along with books/studies as they contribute to a student's overall well-being."

2) In Mumbai, schools like Akanksha Foundation Schools are recognized for actively implementing value-based education, with a focus on community engagement and holistic development, often incorporating initiatives to improve learning and well-being outcomes for underprivileged students; other schools that emphasize value education include those inspired by Lokmanya Tilak's philosophy, where the focus is on ethical conduct and social responsibility as part of the curriculum.

3) Christian missionary schools, such as St. Xavier's College in Kolkata and Madras Christian College, have applied for VBE.

4) Some government schools in states like Karnataka and Delhi are incorporating value-based modules into their teaching, with initiatives like the "Happiness Curriculum" in Delhi focusing on mindfulness and self-expression.

5) Other schools that appear to have been directly or indirectly teaching VBE include Himachal Pradesh's Akal Academy Baru Sahib, which strongly emphasizes compassion, academic excellence, and spiritual values. While Scindia School in Gwalior prioritizes academic success, citizenship, and holistic development, Vidya Bharati schools strongly emphasize moral and ethical principles to help students grow in their sense of social responsibility.

6) Employing a case study approach, Gouda & D'Mello (2019) described the VBE practices in Sharada Vidyanikethana Public School in Karnataka. According to their findings, the school is using a Pancha Mukhi or five-fold education which include: Annamaya Kosha (health & wealth through physical activities including Yoga); Pranamaya Kosha (enhancing the overall personality of the students through Meditation and Bhajans), Manomaya Kosha (wide range of activities-fine arts like Dance, Drama, Music and Arts); Vignanamaya Kosha (practical type of education), and Anandamaya Kosha (picnics, outer tours, learning from peers).

7) The CBSE schools in Borivali East, Mumbai, are leading this effort. By including fundamental human values in their curriculum, these educational institutions are developing responsible, kind, and well-rounded students. They contend that academic success and textbooks are only one aspect of VBE. Its main goal is to inculcate in students fundamental qualities like kindness, empathy, honesty, and social responsibility.

The objective is to produce students who are capable academics and morally upright, emotionally stable, and caring people. Integrity, empathy, responsibility, respect, and perseverance are the core values emphasized by these schools. By fostering these principles, students are claimed to be prepared to be emotionally knowledgeable, socially responsible, and equipped to tackle life's obstacles confidently.

These schools use an approach that includes values in the curriculum, holds morning assemblies and reflection activities, and models teachers' behaviour through curriculum activities, community services, and social responsibility.

Rather than using stereotypes, these schools have attempted to apply VBE in several ways. It is unclear, though, what framework they used. Furthermore, it is currently unclear how these schools evaluate the impact, advantages, and effects of VBE. The measurements they have developed and their assessment methodologies to evaluate the impact are unknown from their websites.

Limitations of VBE

Given the increasing evils in society and the frequent occurrences of rude, inhuman, and humiliating behaviour by students and young people, the significance of VBE is self-explanatory, even though its acceptance and implementation are desperately needed. A clear example is the most recent case of Ranveer Allahbadia's degrading and offensive comments in a televised show. This illustrates how such individuals are brought up without instilling moral values in children. The Indian Supreme Court recently denounced his internet behaviour as being incredibly dishonourable. However, the VBE also has certain limitations, some mentioned below.

1) objectively Measuring the effect of values education on student behaviour is challenging.

2) Constantly incorporating morals into the curriculum might be difficult.

3) Teachers inconsistently use value education due to a lack of social cohesiveness, inclusiveness, and a formal oriental programme.

4) Apathy from society and a lack of parental guidance may be another limitation. Many different types of parents may be too controlling, possessive, and heartless, and who believe that children should not be given the freedom to make their judgments, according to Das Gupta & Biswas (2018).

5) Peer pressure, personal prejudices, and socioeconomic pressures all work against implementing values education in students' daily life (Carbonilla et al., 2024).

6) Different people may interpret values differently in different religious contexts.

vii) Since the research on the VBE might not fully account for its long-term impact, there could be concerns about how sustainable VBE will be in the long run.

Implications of VBE and Limitations of the Study
Implications

Inhumane behaviour has increased due to the global decline in values in recent years (Amarnath, 2022). Das Gupta & Biswas (2018) correctly assert that school issues should be identified, addressed, and resolved by concentrating on the practical application of character or VBE rather than placing the blame on specific people or organizations. VBE is critically vital, desperately needed, and strongly supported by NEP-2020.

Since VBE significantly affects students' social, intellectual, and personal lives, it is crucial for fostering moral and responsible citizenship development. At the same time, VBE is based on social, spiritual, moral, cultural, law-compliance, technology-based values, or other frameworks necessary for social growth and sustained human development.

Value-based education can help students build strong morals and character, which will empower them to apply their knowledge for the good of society. A values-based education will better prepare young people to navigate a complex and dynamic environment (Jaipuria, 2022). As a result, educational institutions such as schools are beginning to recognise and incorporate the value of education into their curricula. Schools and students may find the proposed framework helpful in adopting and implementing its features. Therefore, value-based education must be taught in all schools and institutions to support a perfect and healthy society. A certificate that formally acknowledges a school's dedication to encouraging moral and character development in its students could be issued by the education department to the institution that effectively implements VBE education.

In the future, a case study-based method might be used to investigate successful teacher training programmes for values-specific teaching and learning and the long-term effects of VBE on students' personal and professional lives. Furthermore, by implementing the proposed framework, comparative research across various cultural contexts may be conducted.

In the end, VBE is not an additional element in the modern education teaching and learning system; it has been an integral part of it for centuries. For decades, educational curricula have placed emphasis on preparing students to be morally ethical, socially conscious, and highly responsible citizens. By incorporating values into the education process and system, schools, colleges, and professional institutions may positively impact a civilised society. This is the message given by NEP-2020.

Limitations of the Study

The study's main contribution to the literature is the proposal of a theoretical framework for VBE; however, neither quantitative empirical data nor qualitative case study research is used to validate the theory. Future research must examine the framework's actual testing in real-world scenarios. Additionally, studies of cross-cultural differences and longitudinal studies may be carried out to test the practicability of the suggested framework. Therefore, the aforementioned constraints should be considered while evaluating the significance of the theoretical framework.

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